

18

ARENA REPORT

Volume I, Issue 17

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Your letter
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WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION
Friday, May 12, 1989
Springfield Civic Center
Springfield, MA

Welcome to issue #17 of "Arena Report". It's been a hellacious two weeks since you last heard from me and with the move only two weeks away, it won't get any easier. This is the next to last issue before the "move". (Maybe someone will make a horror flick. "The Move", starring Ragged Ron and Charming Cheryl.) Can't be any worse than "No Holds Barred".

We've got lots to cover in this issue with a "Wrestle War" review which was absolutly dynamite, Part I on wrestling in Mexico from Evan Ginzburg, and the usual reports and recent scuttlebutt from the wild world of pro wrestling. The next issue will be out next week and will emanate from New Haven, 5/19. Still no word on my first issue from Florida. I know Vince is running Orlando in July but no word on anything in the area in June yet. I'm going to say I'll have a tentative issue scheduled for 6/11 from the Eddie Graham Sports Complex featuring Dusty and the Boys. Latest word is that they are not folding even though they only drew a 400 house to the big show in Miami on 5/6. If Dusty leaves, the promotion will still go on. My soon to be new partner in crime, Klon (You have to get a new last name buddy.) warned me about the shape of the Eddie Graham facility. I told him not to worry. Once you've been to the Dallas Sportatorium in the dead of summer with no AC, you can handle anything.

"Arena Report" is published twice a month. All rights are not reserved, but you can get general admission rights. (Boooooo) Cost for now remains 50¢ an issue. I say for now because we may be looking at a 25¢ increase (heavens) starting in Sept. Yes, I'm losing money in this venture so come Sept. I'm going to try to break even. (If you ever meet my wife, don't mention the money issue. She thinks I'm a goof doing this at no profit. Hey, I love mail.) All renewals, letters (I need more, people.) and match reports may be sent to Ron Lemieux, 205 Vernon Ave. #187, Vernon, CT 06066. I'll have my new address in next week's issue. Now onto my last Springfield card which I attended with the subscriber of every bulletin in the universe, Dan Reilly.

Opening Match

Mega Man Tom Magee beat Tim Horner in 12:37. The best opener for a Vince show in a while. Magee does some nice acrobatic moves but his wrestling is kind of clumsy. He'll make a good heel as he has a good sneer. Horner was excellant here. He carried the action some but I have to give Magee some credit. End came as Horner was thrown into the corner but he jumped on the second rope and went for a flying body press but Magee turned it around for the pin. RL **~~7~~ DR- B-

2nd Match

Red Rooster pinned Brooklyn Brawler with a sunset flip in the corner

at 13:09. First half of the match was good including Taylor taking a nice posting on the corner post. They then went to rest.
RL ** DR-C

3rd Match

Warlord pinned Koko Ware after a powerslam in 9:25. Koko now has his hair sprayed green before his match. I say sprayed and not dyed because Warlord was covered in it during the bout. I guess Vince wants Ware to look more like a relative of Frankie. Match was horrible except for Koko's flying dropkick from the top rope in which he landed on his feet. Thus RL $\frac{1}{2}$ * DR-C-

Main Event

John Studd beat Andre the Giant via DQ in 7:42. Haku and Duggan both got involved. Heat was great. Can never figure out why. Ref DQ'd Andre when Haku ran in and attacked Studd the Dud. RL * DR-D for post match brawl.

5th Match

Hacksnore Duggan over King(less) Haku in 9:43. Haku had the crown since it hadn't aired yet. Hack came out to the Slaughter theme. What a model for America. Duggan won with a spear after Haku missed a somersault splash. RL Dud DR-D*

6th Match

Barry Horowitz defeated Mike Peskin in 4:30. This guy Peskin doesn't belong on a house show. I've seen worse but this guy is greener than bad swiss cheese. Scott Dickinson knows him. Apparently, the guy and his mother are always in the dressing rooms looking for a chance to work. He teamed with Scotty the Body down in Florida for a while. RL Dud DR No rating.

Tag Team Match

Fabulous Rougeaus beat The Rockers in 15:08. Match started out slow but picked up when the Fabs were working over Shawn Michaels. They used an ending that I haven't seen Vince use since his dad did when Backlund wrestled Valentine and the title was held up. Jannetty hit Ray with a cross body press and Fred Sparta who had taken a bump counted the three but raised the Rougeau's hand. He stood with his decision as he said Ray was on top. Great ending and the heat on Sparta was incredible. RL *** DR-B

Springfield Notes

Crowd was 5,100 which was good for this main event. Some fans were pissed as Zeus was supposed to be with Mean Gene but not even a mention until they announced it for next card with Bro Love... Danny Davis was a ref tonight and I think they're down playing it until the feud with Garvin as he was even shaking hands with fans and showed no partiality... They return 6/16 with an equally bad line up on paper as tonight: Andre & Haku vs. Studd & Duggan, DiBiase-Roberts, Valentine-Beefcake, Warlord-Bret Hart, and Curt Hennig announced.

Ramblings

Jake Roberts was arrested this past Monday night (5/8) in Orlando, FL. The police were waiting for his match with DiBiase to finish at the Orlando Arena. It was the headline in the Wednesday Orlando Sentinel. Apparently, Jake had a warrant out for his arrest stemming from an incident in December. He's being charged with assault and battery on a John Bartlett in an incident that occurred in Daytona Beach. He was released an hour later
(continued on page 7)

Wrestle War '89 Review

1) Great Muta beat Doug Gilbert in 3:03 using the moonsault press. Doug was a substitute for Junkyard Dog whom I'm assuming no showed because he didn't want to do the job. I'll find out for sure before this issue is out. It would have had more impact if Muta squashed JYD as Gilbert isn't any different than Chance McQuaid or any other jobber in most fans eyes. Eddie, Doug's brother came out to cheer him on but did not get involved. ** 2) Butch Reed beat Ranger Ross with the flying shoulder block in 6:58. Teddy Long came out to take notes. Dead heat. Ross was enthused but Reed was abominable. $\frac{1}{2}$ * because I felt bad for the Ranger. 3) Dick Murdoch beat Bob Orton in a bull rope match in 5:00. Murdoch hog tied Orton and then landed two elbow drops to set up the pin. After the match, Gary Hart and Cowboy Bob hung Dickie over the ropes. Too bad. They should have ended this feud tonight but now they'll drag it on. * for post match festivities. Turner has to be a little more lenient on the blood issue. There should have been some in this match. 4) The Dynamic Dudes upset the Samoan Swat Team in 10:56. Johnny Ace and Shane Douglas make up the dudes. Everyone in Nashville must have watched TBS Sat. night as these guys got a good response on their intro and Sat. was the first time they were on t.v. But they should have left the skate boards in the playground. SST were awesome, Douglas looked good and Ace looked lost sometimes but he did okay. They did a spot where Ace leap frogged Fatu but Samu nailed Johnny with a back kick. Awesome! Fatu hit Shane with a great splash from the top but Ace made the save. As Fatu lifted Douglas, Ace came off the top rope and dropkicked Shane's back so he landed on top for the pin. What a way to get them over. *** $\frac{1}{4}$. ---- The Oak Ridge Boys came out and played a 24:12 set. You could look at this as intermission but if that's the case, they went 9:12 too long. The fans live didn't seem too upset. My only complaint was that the previous tag match had gotten the fans going and they broke the momentum.--- 5) Michael Hayes defeated Lex Luger to win the US Title in 16:27. First six minutes were pretty boring. The turning point came when Lex missed a flying body press and sailed over the top rope. After that these two went to town. Luger lifted Hayes up for the torture rack but P.S. went over the back and gave Luger the DDT. Great spot! Hayes got Lex in a headlock and the "Total Package" pushed Mike into the ropes where ref Nick Patrick took the most invisible bump I've never seen. Terry "Bam Bam" Gordy came out and pushed Michael on top of Luger to win the strap. The Freebirds are re-united. One of my highlights of the night. The Bammer is back in the main stream. **** 6) Sting squished the Iron Sheik to retain the TV Title. Match went 2:17. It stunk but the finish is what they should have done. Sting making Sheik submit to the Scorpion. Give Sheik a pat on the back for being a true professional not like the true bozo JFD. Dud but 20 stars for the finish. 7) Ric Flair regained the NWA Title by pinning Rick Steamboat in 32:16. Every time I see these two wrestle each other, it seems better than the last match. They did some different spots here. At one point Steamer was on the fans side of the barrier and he and Flair were chopping like crazy. Steamboat hurt his leg and Ric worked on it for a while. End came as Ricky lifted Flair for a slam but Ric hung on and won with a cradle. Next we saw the beginning of Ric Flair's turn to babyface. Steamboat raised Ric's hand and left the ring. Jim Ross got in the ring for an interview and you could smell this one a mile away. Terry Funk came in and wanted to be the first one to congratulate Flair. After that he said he also wanted to be the first one to challenge him. Ric told him he had a top ten list he had to defend against and that Terry

hadn't wrestled in a while and he had been hobknobbing with Sly Stallone and others in Hollywood. Terry ended up saying that he didn't mean the challenge anyway and when Ric went to shake his hand Funk exploded. He beat the daylights out of Flair. He gave him a piledriver on the ringside table and slammed a chair on his head. Terry left him for dead. It's amazing how Funk can change his personality from a soft spoken guy to a raving madman. The whole match and angle were super. ***** I'm going to make a prediction that may be wrong but I think the NWA can now turn it around. They'll never be #1 but they'll start making some bucks. 8) Road Warriors beat Steve Williams and Mike Rotunda via DQ at 6:19. Special ref Nikita Koloff threw Sullivan out at 1:00. Hawk did a super clothesline, jumping off the apron and nailing Doc who was outside the ring. Great brawl! Finish came as the Roadies did their top rope clothesline on Doc but at the count of two, Sullivan and Dan Spivey pulled Koloff out of the ring and started beating on him causing the DQ. It was announced later that the World Tag belts had been stripped from the Varsity Club. Tag tourney time. **** 9) Eddie Gilbert & Rick Steiner retained the US Tag belts by beating Dan Spivey & Kevin Sullivan in 6:46. Varsity Club injured Steiner's shoulder at the beginning as Spivey was ramming it into the ringpost. Jim Ross lost it here as he was yelling for the cameras to catch it. They had canned the hair vs. hair angle and Ross announced that. Kevin had Gilbert in a front facelock and Steiner used a clothesline. Gilbert flipped on top for the pin. After they destroyed the champs, they went after Missy but Eddie got a chair to clear the ring. *** ----- I have to say this was the best pay per view I've everseen. I thought the booking was great. I had no clue as to what was going to happen which is the way I like it for these big shows. Very unpredictable for the most part. Of course we knew Funk would get involved and it was obvious Gordy was there as Ross said over and over that P.S. was going to do it alone. I was looking for a bandage on Funk's head as he wrestled Dusty the night before in Miami. Can't believe he didn't blade unless he had his hair covering it up. Congrats to the NWA!!! ... A couple of notes I just received. Steiner has a legit injury to his arm. He tore his bicep two nights before the big show. He'll be out eight weeks. They may just get rid of the US tag belts.

Mexican Wrestling: An Inside Look Part I

by Evan Ginzburg

Recently on vacation, I attended two superb wrestling cards at the Auditorio De Tijuana. I believe "Arena Report's" readers will be interested in the very different style and atmosphere of Mexico's Lucha Libre.

Tijuana's matches are not held in the tourist area and subsequently few were the only Americans present. On the arena steps, the fans browse through dozens of wrestling masks which are reproductions of those worn by the grapplers themselves; the majority of the luchadores are in fact masked. Grab bags filled with old programs and magazines, wrestling dolls and children's toys are also sold for a remarkable 50¢. A gigantic sign visible to all passing traffic offers colorful painted portraits of such headliners as Super Astro and UWA Jr. Heavyweight Champion El Loco Sandokan. \$4.70 in American dollars buys one a ringside seat in a relatively small arena and all announcements and related publications are presented solely in Spanish. Upon entering, Tijuana police check the fans for weapons but once inside, the security is relaxed (except when the occasional middle aged woman at ringside strikes the villains

with their pocketbooks). Many of the wrestlers sign autographs near the dressing room door; most are very gracious and accesible to the fans.

(End of Part I)

---- Part 2 will be in issue 18. I was going to put more in part I but with this issue already packed, I decided to save the bulk of this article for next week. In Part 2, Evan will give us insight into the matches in Mexico.

Correspondent Reports

Civic Auditorium

Omaha, NE

April 26, 1989

Correspondent: Bruce Grummert

This was a TV taping for "Superstars of Wrestling" so instead of listing all the squashes, Bruce gave us the highlights. Kendo Nagasaki debuted defeating Tim Horner in the opener. Fuji is his manager. This was a tryout for Kendo. Hope he failed... Hacksaw Duggan pinned King Haku and Heenan left him in the ring by himself... Lanny Poffo beat Jim Powers in 9 minutes... Tony Schiavone interviewed Elizabeth and she said she'd stand by Hogan forever. Yeah, until she has Macho Jr. She is pregnant... Warlord beat Tim Horner... Jimmy Snuka beat Monkeytonk Man with the Superfly splash. These two will be going around the horn soon... John Studd beat Andre the Giant via DQ. Haku and Duggan both get involved and Andre got DQ'd when Haku jumped John Dudd... Duggan was then coronated as the new king since he beat Haku... Red Taylor beat Brooklyn Brawler with Ron Garvin as ref. After bout, Heenan and Lombardi attack Rugged Ron until he cleans the ring... Hercules beat Barbarian when Fuji hit Herc with the cane. This bout was on Prime Time last week... Brain Busters beat Koko Ware and Blue Blazer when Arn pinned Owen... Randy Savage beat Ultimate Warrior on a count out when Rude came to ringside and they brawled on the floor... Jake Roberts pinned Greg Valentine with a reverse cradle. When Jake threw Damien out, the snake bit him. Wonderful gimmick to have... Hulk Hogan won a cage match over Big Boss Man in 8:09. Bubba bled heavily. Attendance: 10,310 a sell out.

St. George Schram Hall

Pittsburgh, PA

April 30, 1989

Correspondent: John Lanigan

1) Preston Steele beat Mysterious Dr. X with a flying body press in 7:59. Steele did the Flair flip over the buckles slowly but succesfully. (D+) 2) Jumpin Jack Flash beat Chuck Lewis to win the North American Jr. championship in 15:07. (C+) 3) Dante DeNucci & Bill Fishinger won the vacant Tri-State North American Tag belts beating James Folger & Krusher Klebanski in a two out of three fall bout. Fishinger made Krusher submit to the abdominal stretch at :29 of the first fall. Folger pinned DeNucci to even it up in 9:46. The third fall saw DeNucci sling shot Fishinger over the rope to splash Klebanski for the win. (C-) 4) Lord Jonathon Real beat Hercules Gavin via DQ to retain the North American Title in 11:52. Real was using a foreign object but Gavin took it away from him and showed the ref who thought Herc was using it so he dq'd him. (D) 5) Baron Mike Donatelli beat Pretty Boy Bobby Adonis with a piledriver in 6:33. (D-) 6) Mark Curtis beat Sean Gavin with a scissors arm lock at 13:25. Curtis works this group as a manager while Gavin is Herc Gavin's cousin. Kind of a gimmick match as both weigh in the mid 100 pound area. (C+) Att: 161

Philadelphia Civic Center

Philadelphia, PA

April 30, 1989

Correspondent: Gary Fishman

1) Shane Douglas pinned The Raider in a decent opener. *½ 2) Butch Reed

pinned Bob Emory with a flying tackle. * 3) Rick Steiner beat Joey Maggs with a fisherman suplex. * $\frac{1}{4}$ 4) Great Muta beat Eddie Gilbert on a forfeit. Muta a sub for ear injured Sullivan. Muta blew mist in Eddie's eyes before the bell. Gary Hart and Muta doubled on Gilbert until Steiner and Douglas made the save and wrapped a towel around Gilbert's eyes. Wonder why they don't have to do that to the jobbers. 5) Samoan Swat Team over Junkyard Dog & Steve Casey when Fatu pinned Casey. Match was real good as JFD wasn't in very long. *** 6) Dick Murdoch double count out with Bob Orton. Good brawling but nothing great. * $\frac{1}{2}$ 7) Road Warriors beat Steve Williams & Mike Rotunda when Hawk pinned Williams. ** $\frac{1}{4}$ 8) Sting beat Dan Spivey. ** 9) Lex Luger beat Michael Hayes on a reverse decision as Hayes knocked Lex out with a foreign object and pinned him. But Sting came out to explain what happened and the ref DQ'd P.S. *** $\frac{1}{2}$ 10) Rick Steamboat beat the Iron Sheik with a sunset flip off the top rope. It looked bad as Sheik was bent over waiting 20 seconds for Steamer to jump. * $\frac{1}{4}$ Att:800

Meadowlands Arena

East Rutherford, NJ

May 8, 1989

Correspondent: Elyse Zois

1) Curt Hennig used a cradle suplex to defeat Blue Blazer. B- 2) Bret Hart and Greg Valentine went to a time limit draw when Bret had Greg pinned. C 3) Honkeytonk Man beat Hillbilly Jim when Jimmy Hart distracted the "Hick from Mudlick" and was rolled up. D 4) Ultimate Warrior beat Rick Rude via count out when he chased him out of the ring and made it back in before the count. After, he beat up Heenan. D+ 5) Red Taylor pinned Brooklyn Brawler with a sunset flip. Elyse says she's tired of this. I'll second the motion. D+ 6) Jim Powers pinned Mike Sharpe with a powerslam. C- 7) Rick Martel upended Tito Santana with the same skit as everywhere. Martel attacks Tito early in the show and later they do a three minute match ending with Martel pinning Santana with his feet on the corner ropes. C- 8) Demolition beat Twin Towers via dq as Boss Man was caught hitting Axe with the night stick. Best of the night. B

Girard High School

Girard, OH

May 12, 1989

Correspondent: John Lanigan

1) Lord Zoltan beat Sonny Pride with a sunset flip in 12:18. C+ 2) Hercules Gavin beat Krusher Klebanski with a roll up in 10:34. C 3) Sy Youngblood over Jesse Salica in 10:50. It was a double pin but the ref claimed Sy lifted his shoulder first. 4) Al Perez pinned Johnny Valiant using his feet for leverage in 9:50. D 5) Rick Casey (Wendall Cooley) beat Manny Fernandez via DQ in 14:18. Perez interfered on behalf of Manny. C 6) Midnight Express beat Pat Tanaka & Paul Diamond via DQ in 14:22. After the bell, the Midnites gave both Bad Co. members a double DDT and pin but the ref had already signalled for the bell earlier. John was the timekeeper tonight and he wants lessons from Harry White. He forgot twice to give the 5 minute call. Last match gets a B- Att: 700

Letter To The Editor

VCR Trouble

I know you use your VCR with great regularity as you watch many wrestling tapes from around the world. I'm therefore writing to you in the hope that you can help me with this technical problem.

I was recently enjoying Clash VI and got up to the part when the ghosts of JYD and Butch Reed entered the ring. Ross mentioned that they were renewing an old New Orleans feud, but I realized in JYD's

case that was 5,000 Big Macs and 75 pounds ago (and for Reed, two knees ago). Life is just too short and precious to sit through something like this.

I fast forwarded through the match, watching it between those thick, annoying lines. At first, everything seemed okay, but then I noticed something weird. Although I was fast forwarding for quite awhile, these two titans (pardon the pun) just weren't moving! As the tape progressed, they just stayed on the mat like rhinos in heat.

Ron, is my machine o.k. or did two really big names just lay there in front of 2 million viewers?

Evan Ginzburg

Bayside, NY

RL- Maybe you were watching National Geographic by mistake?

(continued from page 2)

on \$2,500 bail. Mr. Bartlett allegedly met Jake at a bar and they went together to another bar. On the way there, Jake made some derogatory comments about Daytona Beach women and Mr. Bartlett defended them. Jake told him to stop the car and when he did, Jake supposedly punched him in the eye and the stomach. Roberts has a court date in June. In a relation to that story, Jake is having minor surgery on his neck and will miss some time. Lo and behold, RODDY PIPER started full time last night in LA taking Jake's place against DiBiase. He'll be working with Ted around the horn. They had a sell out in LA with 3,000 turned away and they have already sold out San Fran tonight (5/13) but that was without knowledge of Roddy being there... Ted Turner will be making a big acquisition announcement on 5/21. A lot of speculation was on Piper but now no one really knows who it is... More new faces headed to the NWA: Scott Hall, Flynn' Brian as in Pillman, and Ricky Santana. They taped television this past week and they had Brad Armstrong, Johnny Rich, Davey Rich, and Eddie Guerrero all come in to do stretcher jobs for Terry Funk... They'll run a gimmick where Ric Flair says he has to retire due to the injuries suffered at the hands of Funk but he'll end up attacking Terry setting up their Baltimore Bash Pay-Per View in July... Midnite Express will be back 6/10 and work with Butch Reed and Bob Orton in their TV return... Main event for Summerslam at The Meadowlands is Savage-Zeus vs. Hogan-Beefcake. I guess they didn't trust Zeus in there alone... Funk has a part in the newly released Patrick Swayze movie "Road House"... Shane Douglas was at that show in Girard just visiting as he's from the Pittsburgh area... Just a coincidence that Turner and Vince's "A" shows had new openings this week-end, we doubt it... During a Larry Zybyszko squash on ESPN last week, a fan held up a sign that said "Wife Beater". I'm sure Verne was happy with that camera man, especially since Larry is married to one of his daughters... Morton Downey Jr. recently had a show in Springfield wearing a Wrestlemania V cap. Of course it was hiding his hair which he reported was butchered by some skinheads. Actually, it was a bad haircut from Brutus on April 2... Bobby Heenan was on "Arsenio Hall" Thursday night, thanks Ted. He came off like a total buffoon. As if anyone really believes he acts like that in real life. Please... I got to see the Embry-Akbar match. Now replace Mark Lourance with Jim Ross in that angle and it would have been great. Marko says, "Oh, I'm stunned." with about as much believability as Norweiga. (Spelled wrong)...

Pull the plug time; J.D. McKay, Rte 2, Box 291, Louisville, MS 39339 puts out "Ringside Reflector" at \$2.00 an issue. If you like commentary from readers all across the country, this is for you. Controversial issues? You bet. Just ask for a copy of his last issue. Good stuff. Tell him "AR" sent you... Tom Burke, 31 Groveland St., Springfield, MA 01108 puts out "Global Wrestling". Write to Tom for details. He's quite a wrestling historian and if you like results, you'll love his bulletin.... All Pro Wrestling Publishing Co. puts out "Pro Wrestling Digest". One of the finest put together publications around. Write to them at 4951 Airport Parkway, Suite 700, Dallas, TX 75248. \$3.00 an issue.

Final Word

Well, that's it for another round. Next issue will be my farewell to New England issue. But how can I be sad when all I'll have in Florida is beaches almost year round, sun, fun, beaches, sun, fun, Dusty, oh, maybe I will miss it here after all. Thanks go out to Evan, Bruce "When the promoter sees me they run" Grummert, John, Gary, Elyse, and Klon for their help this issue. I truly have a blast doing this and if it weren't for my readers, well, see yaaaa. Take care gang.

Until next week,

Ron

Don't get excited if you have Jake-DiBiase matches in your city in June. Piper is only in for 10 days.

Also, Dusty rumored to be headed Titan's way.